AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The claims and their status are reflected below. Claims 21-51 are pending in the application after entry of the amendments, below.

1. – 20. (cancelled)

21. (previously presented) A method for tracking items in a delivery system, comprising:

writing into a plurality of storage labels, said labels having transmitters, each of the labels associated with an item, the information concerning delivery of the items, said information in each label useful for automated sorting and tracking the item along their passage to destinations;

transporting the items and their associated labels;

applying query signals to the labels to retrieve the information and to cause said labels to provide said information through their transmitters, wherein said transmitters are caused to transmit said information by means of energy of the query signals received by the labels; and

sorting the items by means of the information retrieved.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said applying causes the transmitters of said labels to transmit said information without using any energy source, controller or microprocessor in or associated with the labels.

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said applying applies the signals by means of wireless communication.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, said system having a plurality of local collection outlets, said writing being performed at the outlets.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 24, said system having a plurality of local collection hubs, each hub for collecting packages from a corresponding number of outlets, wherein said transporting transports the items from said corresponding number of outlets to each

of said hubs, and said applying applies the signals at the hubs, and said sorting sorts the items at each of the hubs.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 25, wherein said transporting transports the items from one or more local hubs to a plurality of distribution centers or a central sorting hub, said applying and causing applies the signals to the items and causes the labels to provide said information at the centers or the central sorting hub, and said sorting sorts the items at the centers or the central sorting hub.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said writing writes into each label information related to name, address, telephone number or zip code related to destinations, and/or tracking number or special delivery instructions related to the item associated with such label.

28. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising sending the information retrieved to a central computer for tracking the items.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said writing comprises contacting the labels by a label writer.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising attaching the labels to their associated items after the writing step.

31. (previously presented) A system for tracking items for delivery comprising:

a plurality of storage labels having transmitters, each of said labels associated with an item, wherein information is stored into each of said labels concerning delivery of its associated item, said information useful for automated sorting and tracking the items along their passage to destinations;

an instrument transporting the items with their associated labels;

a device applying query signals to the labels to retrieve the information, said labels providing said information through their transmitters, wherein said transmitters are caused to transmit said information by means of energy of the query signals received by the labels; and

a sorter sorting the items by means of the information retrieved.

32. (previously presented) The system of claim 31, further comprising a plurality of collection hubs and distribution centers, said instrument transporting the items from the hubs to the centers, said device applying the query signals and receiving said information provided by the labels at the centers.

33. (previously presented) The system of claim 31, further comprising a recorder that writes said information into each of at least some of the labels, said recorder comprising a reader/writer and a host computer.

34. (previously presented) The system of claim 31, said device comprising one or more portable data readers each of which comprises a transceiver that transmits the query signals and receives said information from the labels through wireless communication.

35. (previously presented) The system of claim 31, further comprising a recorder that writes said information into each of at least some of the labels, a plurality of local collection outlets, said recorder being located at one of the outlets.

36. (previously presented) The system of claim 35, said system having a plurality of local collection hubs, each hub for collection packages from a corresponding number of outlets, said instrument transporting the items from said corresponding number of outlets to each of said hubs, said device applying the signals at the hubs, and said sorter sorting the items at each of the hubs.

37. (previously presented) The system of claim 31, further comprising a plurality of local hubs, said instrument transporting the items to the hubs, said device applying the query signals and receiving said information provided by the labels at the hubs.

38. (previously presented) The system of claim 37, said sorter sorting the items at the hubs using the retrieved information.

39. (previously presented) The system of claim 31, further comprising a plurality of distribution centers and a central hub, said instrument transporting the items from local hubs to the centers or the central hub, said device applying the query signals and receiving said information provided by the labels at the centers or the central hub.

40. (previously presented) The system of claim 31, wherein said labels include no energy source, or controller or microprocessor and are suitable for attachment to the items.

41. (previously presented) The system of claim 31, further comprising a recorder that writes said information into each of at least some of the labels, said recorder writing into each label information related to name, address, telephone number or zip code related to destinations, and/or tracking number or special delivery instructions related to the item associated with such label.

42. (previously presented) A method for tracking items in a delivery system, comprising:

writing into a plurality of storage labels at one or more receiving stations, said labels having transmitters, each of the labels associated with an item, said information in each label